E721
.S95

ch 12. Del to Wm Sulzer 2000 cop
N. F. R.

E 721
.S95
Copy 1

THE NATIONAL DEFENSE.

SPEECH

OF

HON. WM. SULZER,

OF NEW YORK,

IN THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Tuesday, March 8, 1898.

WASHINGTON.
1898.

E72
.S95
30629

Mr. W. A. Smith

SPEECH

OF

HON. WILLIAM SULZER.

The House having under consideration the bill (H. R. 8927) making appropriations to supply urgent deficiencies in the appropriations for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1898, and for prior years, and for other purposes—

Mr. SULZER said:

Mr. SPEAKER: This is a time for the exhibition of the greatest degree of patriotism and for the exemplification of the smallest degree of partisanship. This is the time for action and not for talk. This is the time for unity, for harmony, and for us all to stand together shoulder to shoulder for the safety and the greatness of the Republic, for the grandeur and the glory of the flag, and for the vindication of American honor and American statesmanship.

Imbued with this spirit, and not unconscious of the gravity of the threatening situation which to-day confronts the whole country, I heartily approve this emergency measure, and as a Jeffersonian Democrat I shall gladly vote for it, and hope it will pass this House without a dissenting vote and by a unanimous voice.

In a time like this there should be no parties and no party politics. We should all be patriots, and act with a singleness of purpose for the best interest of all the people and for the greatness and glory of the Republic.

For these reasons I am heartily in favor of this bill, and for the same reasons I voted for and advocated the bill which passed this House yesterday adding two more artillery regiments to the Regular Army, in order that the guns on our coast fortifications may be intelligently and efficiently manned by patriotic and experienced soldiers. It has been said in some of the newspapers of the country that I was opposed to the artillery bill and that I objected to its early consideration.

That is false in every particular. On the contrary, I voted for a favorable report of the bill in the Committee on Military Affairs, of which I am a member, and, as the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD shows, subsequently did all that I could on the floor of the House to aid the chairman of that committee to secure unanimous consent for its immediate and early consideration. The objection to that request came from another member of this House. I make it a rule to seldom refute a newspaper error concerning my official action, because I know that a lie travels faster than the truth and newspapers dislike to admit or correct mistakes. But in this matter I am deeply interested and appeal to the RECORD as to the correctness of the statements I now make, and will not have my motives or actions misconstrued or misunderstood by any man or any newspaper.

Mr. Speaker, as is well known, no member of this House has more persistently and consistently for the past three years advocated and championed Cuban freedom and Cuban independence. It is now a matter of great personal gratification to me that at last we are alive to the gravity of the situation and that Congress is about to do something and take decisive action.

It should have done so long ago.

In my judgment we should have recognized the independence of Cuba or granted her patriotic sons belligerent rights long ere this. We have waited too long. We have delayed too much. If we had taken decisive action, as we should have done, a year or two years ago, this crisis would have been averted and Cuba would to-day be free and independent and in her proper place among the proud nations of the world.

All my sympathies are now and always have been with the heroic and struggling Cuban patriots. I want to see them win their independence and secure the blessings of self-government.

Whether this measure means peace or war, I hope and I sincerely believe it means the freedom of Cuba. We do not want peace at any price. We want peace with honor, and there can be no peace with honor if this great Republic continues to permit the wanton butchery, the horrible brutality, the blood-curdling assassination, and the willful extermination of innocent men, women, and children to go on in Cuba. We do not want war;

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 013 902 176 9

neither do we fear war. If war is inevitable, if war comes, it will not be our fault. It will come, if it comes at all, because Spain seeks it and demands it to bolster up her decayed and tottering throne, threatened by revolution at home, and to distract the attention of the civilized world from her inhuman practices and frightful barbarities under the guise of war in Cuba. I heartily favor this bill and hope it means the beginning of the end of poor Cuba's woes and trials and troubles, and her early freedom and independence. Cuba is lost to Spain forever, and Spain knows it. The quicker Spain admits it, the better for Spain and Spanish bondholders.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion permit me to say, as a member of this House representing as loyal and as patriotic a constituency as exists to-day in the country, that no one will do more, that no one will go farther than I will, now or hereafter, to do all in my power to promote the national defense, uphold and maintain the national honor, and support and strengthen the hands of the President to speedily bring about what every liberty-loving American citizen wants to see—the freedom and the independence of Cuba. [Loud applause.]

[Here the hammer fell.]

3103

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 013 902 176 9